**Text-Dependent Analysis Questions**

**2014**

**Notes and Resources**

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**Center for Assessmentcfa**

**And**

**Pennsylvania Department of Education**http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=7237&mode=2http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=7237&mode=2

**Agenda**

* Understanding Text-Dependent Analysis Questions
* Analyzing a Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Question
* Developing TDAs
* Analyzing the Text-Dependent Analysis Rubric
* Scoring student work using the state TDA scoring guidelines
* Analyzing student work to diagnose student strengths and needs related to text-dependent analysis

**Before we begin…**

Take 5-10 minutes to:

1. Record your understanding of **Text-Dependent Analysis Questions** by explaining what a student is expected to do when responding to a **Text-Dependent Analysis Question.**

2. Write down as many **questions** as you can about Text-Dependent Analysis Questions.

Take 10 minutes to discuss your understanding with your table group to gain additional understanding. Share your discussion with the entire group.

**Guide to Creating Text-Dependent Analysis Lessons and Questions**

**Adapted from *Achieve the Core* (achievethecore.org)**

**Text-Dependent Questions: What Are They?**

The PA Core Standards for reading strongly focus on students gathering evidence, knowledge, and insight from what they read. Indeed, nearly all of the Reading Standards in each grade *require* text-dependent analysis; accordingly, aligned curriculum materials should have a similar percentage of text-dependent analysis questions.

As the name suggests, a text-dependent analysis question specifically asks a question that can only be answered by referring explicitly back to the text being read. It does not rely on any particular background information extraneous to the text nor depend on students having other experiences or knowledge; instead it privileges the text itself and what students can extract from what is before them.

For example, in a close analytic reading of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address,” the following would **not** be text-dependent questions:

* *Why did the North fight the Civil War?*
* *Have you ever been to a funeral or grave site?*
* *Lincoln says that the nation is dedicated to the proposition that “all men are created equal.” Why is equality an important value to promote?*

The overarching problem with these questions is that they require no familiarity at all with Lincoln’s speech in order to answer them. Responding to these sorts of questions instead requires students to go outside the text. Such questions can be tempting to ask because they are likely to get students talking, but they take students away from considering the actual point Lincoln is making. They seek to elicit a personal or general response that relies on individual experience and opinion, and answering them will not move students closer to understanding the text of the “Gettysburg Address.”

Good text-specific questions will often **linger over specific phrases and sentences** to ensure careful comprehension of the text—they help students see something worthwhile that they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text-dependent analysis questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

* Analyze paragraphs on a sentence-by-sentence basis and sentences on a word-by-word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words
* Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another
* Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole
* Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts
* Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do
* Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve
* Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated

## Implementing the PA Core Standards: A Primer on “Close Reading of Text”

(adapted from *Close Reading-Aspen Institute, 2012)*

**Close Reading and Text-Dependent Analysis**

**Introduction**

Among the most significant of the shifts in PA Core Standards - English language arts are the following expectations: (<http://static.pdesas.org/content/documents/PA%20Core%20Standards%20ELA%20PreK-5%20March%202014.pdf>)

***Balancing the reading of informational and literary texts so that students can access nonfiction and authentic texts, as well as literature***

***Focusing on close and careful reading of text so that students are learning from the text***

***Building a staircase of complexity (i.e., each grade level requires a “step” of growth on the “staircase”) so that students graduate college or career ready***

***Supporting writing from sources (i.e., using evidence from text to inform or make an argument) so that students use evidence and respond to the ideas, events, facts, and arguments presented in the texts they read***

***Stressing an academically focused vocabulary so that students can access more complex texts***

These expectations create a significant challenge, as schools at all levels have paid insufficient attention to the development of students’ reading comprehension as they progress through increasingly complex texts. This challenge is exacerbated by the readability levels of high school texts, which have trended downward in difficulty, while the readability levels of college texts have increased.ii In 2006, the average reading level of college texts was 350 Lexile levels higher than those at the end of high school—which represents more than a third of the entire reading-level range from second through 12th grade.iii

To prepare students for the rigors of college and careers, then, schools must place a greater emphasis on the teaching of increasingly complex texts. There is a dispute, however, among researchers and practitioner-leaders on the role of the Close Reading strategy in achieving this goal, including the extent to which teachers should assist students with background knowledge in order to help them construct meaning of the text.

Experts in the reading research and broader practitioner communities have offered what appear to be divergent perspectives on the kinds of instructional practices that facilitate the development of the deep comprehension called for in the standards. Early training and messaging by some organizations suggested that Close Reading eliminated the privilege of background knowledge and that pre-reading strategies were to be excised from Close Reading lessons. Other experts questioned these recommendations, pointing out that readers *always* use background knowledge of the world, along with knowledge of how language and text work, to build a coherent representation of what the text says. Some researchers and advocates expressed concern that recommendations to minimize the role of prior knowledge will widen the gap between poor and proficient readers.iv

There is a substantial body of research that should not be ignored in making decisions about the use of the Close Reading strategy. Readers’ background knowledge always shapes comprehension, allowing them to combine new information with what they already know to construct new knowledge. What readers bring to a text defines what they can take from it— there is no eliminating the advantage that greater background knowledge confers.

We also know from experience, however, that many students are not taught how to read appropriately complex text independently and with precision. The PA Core explicitly describes a set of reading and analytic abilities that can only be developed through regular practice and feedback, such as by interpreting words and phrases as they are used in a text, analyzing the structure of text, and explaining how an author reasons and uses evidence. The PA Core expects—and equity demands—that *all* students have the chance to productively struggle with complex texts. Especially for students with lower reading skills and gaps in background knowledge; Close Reading can be an important strategy to accelerate and deepen their own learning.

Teachers need to know *when* and *how* to make use of Close Reading in strengthening students’ reading, furthering students’ independence, and deepening their reading comprehension. To assist teachers in understanding and employing Close Reading, this primer addresses the following key questions:

1. What is Close Reading of text, and what are its essential attributes? How, and for what purposes, should teachers employ this strategy?
2. What is the role of background knowledge in the development of reading comprehension, and when should teachers activate and/or provide background knowledge?
3. What should teachers and district leaders consider about Close Reading as they prepare to implement it in practice?

**Close Reading Defined**

Definition: Close Reading of text involves an investigation of a short piece of text, with multiple readings done over multiple instructional lessons. Through text-based questions and discussion, students are guided to deeply analyze and appreciate various aspects of the text, such as key vocabulary and how its meaning is shaped by context; attention to form, tone, imagery and/or rhetorical devices; the significance of word choice and syntax; and the discovery of different levels of meaning as passages are read multiple times. The teacher’s goal in the use of Close Reading is to gradually release responsibility to students—moving from an environment where the teacher models for students the strategies to one where students employ the strategies on their own when they read independently v. Close Reading does more than advance reading development; it is a mechanism for teaching about logical arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, for gleaning evidence from text and applying critical thinking skills. Close Reading is as much a way of thinking and processing text that is emphasized throughout the PA Core as it is about a way of reading a singular piece of text. Close Reading cannot be reserved for students who already are strong readers; it should be a vehicle through which all students grapple with advanced concepts and participate in engaging discussions regardless of their independent reading level.

**Attributes of Close Reading Lessons**

Close Reading strategies will vary depending on the content under consideration, the place in the curriculum, and the goals of the particular lesson. But most Close Reading lessons will share the following attributes:

1. **Selection of a brief, high-quality, complex text.** Limiting the length of the passage allows students the opportunity to apply new skills and strategies through multiple readings of the text.
2. **Individual reading of the text.** Students unable to read the text independently might engage in a partner read or a group read in lieu of an independent attempt.
3. **Group reading aloud.** A group read aloud might be teacher- or student-led. This practice supports the engagement of all students, especially those who struggle with reading the text independently, and reinforces the primacy of the text throughout Close Reading lessons.
4. **Text-based questions and discussion that focus on discrete elements of the text.** Questions and discussion may focus on the author’s word choices and repetition, specific sentences, literary devices, academic vocabulary, or particular passages containing information that is key to the curricular objective
5. **Discussion among students.** These discussions, either in small groups or across the whole class, will ensure that the text—as opposed to personal reflections—remains the focus as the reader explores the author’s choices.
6. **Writing about the text.** Students may be asked to reflect on the knowledge gained through Close Reading in short or long written passages.

**Background Knowledge and Close Reading**

Part of the debate about the use of Close Reading as an instructional strategy is the role of background knowledge in the process, and when background knowledge should be constructed. Research establishes a reciprocal relationship between background knowledge and comprehension—an individual with significant knowledge about a topic

uses that knowledge to build a coherent representation of what the text says. A knowledgeable reader needs only to update his or her preexisting situation model with new information presented in the text, while a reader who lacks background knowledge on the topic of the text is less able to build an accurate representation of what the text means.vi Fortunately, teachers can teach less skilled readers what they need to become skilled readers, beginning with building disciplinary and world knowledge.vii Teachers need to know their students well in order to gauge how much background knowledge students have (or don’t have) and the extent to which background knowledge should be provided to ensure they are able to comprehend the text.

For the purposes of Close Reading, it is essential to distinguish between the background knowledge that is required to understand the text and the knowledge sought to be gained from reading the text. Teachers should ensure their students have enough context and background knowledge to access the text, either through prior instruction and/or pre-reading activities. That said, previewing the content of the text undermines the value of a Close Reading exercise. If a teacher feels the need to deliver content from the text rather than allow students to discover the content independently and through text-dependent questions and discussion, then either the text is not appropriate for a Close Reading lesson or the teacher does not believe his/her students are ready for the rigor that Close Reading of complex text demands. While teachers need to exercise discretion in the selection of texts and related instructional practices, it is essential that all students engage in Close Reading of complex texts that meet grade-level expectations established by the PA Core.

**Additional Considerations When Implementing Close Reading in Practice**

***• Close Reading, as a multifaceted strategy for teaching reading, should be situated within a broader, comprehensive literacy framework.***

The teaching of reading is a complex, multilayered effort that requires the orchestration of a myriad of intentional instructional decisions and a variety of instructional techniques. Close Reading of text is one important strategy for fostering independence and analytic skills.

The PA Core standards draw attention to the critical gap between reading demands and expectations in K-12 settings and those in college and careers. This gap has led to a heightened awareness of the qualities and complexity of texts being chosen for curricular inclusion and used for instruction. Text complexity plays an integral role in the planning and execution of the Close Reading strategy. Teachers implementing Close Reading need varied opportunities to learn about text complexity and practice applying the process for identifying appropriate text at their respective grade levels. To be suited for Close Reading instruction, a text must be of the highest quality, with a richness and depth that supports and deserves deep analysis. Teachers’ ability to identify rich, complex text—based on quantitative and qualitative measures, as well as variables related to the specific students and tasks at hand—is as important as understanding the principles that undergird the concept of text complexity.

In order to bring the Close Reading strategy to life, teachers will need to deepen their understanding of text-dependent questions—how they are constructed, and how they are intentionally crafted to support the careful examination of text called for in Close Reading. Text-dependent questions, as the name suggests, ask students to provide evidence from the text and draw inferences based on what the text says. Well-constructed text-dependent questions cause students to reflect on the text as opposed to reading quickly to get the gist of the selection.

The inclusion of these instructional strategies in daily practice will require professional development that meets teachers at their current level of understanding. While the specifics are best determined by districts and schools, it is important to acknowledge that merely exhorting teachers to employ Close Reading and text-dependent questions is inadequate. Teachers need to understand what the PA Core expects and the research undergirding these expectations, they need resources to guide them in adapting new strategies for their classrooms, and they need opportunities to practice and get feedback that improves their effectiveness.ix

***• Close Reading is used judiciously and employed for specific learning outcomes.***

A Close Reading lesson is typically situated within a longer unit of study and might be employed once or twice during the unit, for two to four days each time. For example, an excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech might be the subject of a Close Reading exercise in a history class after several days of study focused on the civil rights era. Alternately, or perhaps in concert, the text selection could also be used in an English language arts class focused on rhetoric.

The broader curricular context in which Close Reading takes place usually mitigates the need for extensive pre-reading activities, as prior instruction not directly related to the text prepares students to engage in the Close Reading lesson independently This understanding also helps frame the role of Close Reading as one strategy within a teacher’s literacy and content development toolkit.

The specific instructional moves that define the Close Reading strategy are modified and adapted by the purpose of a particular lesson in order to meet the developmental level of learners. Teachers make critical decisions about the text chosen and the questions asked to facilitate deep understanding of content and/or the author’s intent.

While a Close Reading lesson usually will sit within a broader unit of related content, there are occasions when a teacher might choose to have students complete a “cold read.” Such an exercise can prepare students for PA Core-aligned assessments, and for the real-world experience of encountering text in unfamiliar contexts.

***• Close Reading builds skill and motivation in the reader.***

Grappling with rich, complex texts is an exciting, thought-expanding experience that can change minds and mold beliefs. Repeated opportunities to process and manage such texts enhance the reader’s knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, and the world—an experience all students should have. Historically, though, this approach has been reserved for our more advanced students; those deemed less able have been denied access to rich, rigorous text. Teachers who have implemented Close Reading in their classrooms are finding that being challenged by complex texts is not, as they feared, tripping students up; on the contrary, it is actually motivating students to work harder and think more deeply.

**Conclusion**

Educators need to harness the knowledge of research, the wisdom of experience, and the imperative for improvement to implement Close Reading effectively within the context of a comprehensive literacy framework. Teachers have to be innovative and creative, while connecting decisions about instructional practice to the research on reading development and the explicit demands of the PA Core. Hence we recommend that practitioners:

1. Are deliberate and intentional determining when, and for what instructional purposes, Close Reading is employed. The goal is to move students to read closely, independent of the teacher.
2. Understand that while engaged in Close Reading lessons, students naturally use prior knowledge to deepen their comprehension of the text. Teachers should activate prior knowledge and build background knowledge when appropriate, while ensuring that students’ examination of text is the central means of conveying information.

ii Jeanne S. Chall, Sue S. Conard, and Susan H. Harris, *An Analysis of Textbooks in Relation to Declining SAT Scores* (Princeton, N.J.: College Board,

1977).

iii Gary L. Williamson, *Aligning the Journey With a Destination: A Model for K–16 Reading Standards* (Durham, N.C.: MetaMetrix Inc., 2006).

iv Suzanne M. Adolf et al., Developmental Changes in Reading Comprehension: Implications for Assessment and Instruction,” in S. Jay Samuels and Alan Farstrup, eds., *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, 4th edition (New York: International Reading Association, 2011).

v P. David Pearson and Margaret C. Gallagher, “The Instruction of Reading Comprehension,” *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 8, no. 3 (July 1983) 317-344.

vi Walter Kintsch, “The Role of Knowledge in Discourse Comprehension: A Construction-Integration Model.” *Psychological Review 95, no. 2* (1988) 163-182.

vii Nell K. Duke et al., “Essential Elements of Fostering and Teaching Reading Comprehension,” in S. Jay Samuels and Alan Farstrup, eds., *What Research Has to Say About Reading Instruction*, 4th edition (New York: International Reading Association, 2011).

ix For more information on text complexity and the design and use of text-dependent questions, see www.aspendrl.org. Joaquin Tamayo, Jr., “Tools for

Teachers Facilitator’s Guide: Close Reading & Text-Dependent Questions.”

**Approaching the Design of Text-Dependent Analysis Questions**

**Step 1:** Read and annotate the text. Search for vocabulary, text structure, syntax, essential understandings that students will need to “linger over” or may be the focus of the text-dependent discussions. Consider:

* Writing style (e.g., repetition of sentence structure, phrases, particular words)
* Passages that are ripe for making inferences, difficult to read because of syntax, make a significant point or need interpretation, complicated because of figurative language
* Consider tone, flashbacks, foreshadowing, dialect, bias, irony, imagery, allusion, metaphor, simile

**Step 2:** Identify the essential understandings and key supporting details from the text (what is noteworthy and what supports this). **Essential Understandings**:

* + are constructed in complete sentences
  + focus on at least two concepts
  + form a relationship between the concepts using strong verbs
  + have transfer value and prime students to make connections so no proper nouns or past tense verbs are used
  + represent what you really want students to understand about the text; answers the question “why is this important?” or “how”?

Examples:

1. People search for a place to call home and a sense of family to foster security.
2. Sometimes the truth needs to remain a secret to protect people from harm.
3. Effective leaders can help unite the disparate groups to achieve a unified goal by using compromise and strategy.
4. The structures and behaviors of living organisms help them adapt to their environments so they can survive.
5. Artifacts from diverse world cultures reveal information and insight about the daily life, beliefs, and customs of a civilization.

**Concepts** represent mental images, constructs, or word pictures that help people to arrange and classify fragmented and isolated facts and information *(“Social Studies Overview” from The NY State Educational Department, Albany, NY)*

**Step 3:** Locate and identify academic vocabulary and key text structures that are connected to the essential understandings and key ideas.

* **Tier One –** everyday speech
* **Tier Two –** general academic words: often represent subtle or precise ways to say relatively simple things
* **Tier Three –** domain-specific words

**Step 4:** Propose a culminating text-dependent analysis question

* Revisit essential understandings, key details, and review grade level standards.
* Determine how students can best demonstrate understanding of the text passage.

**Step 5:** Identify the expected proficient-level response

**Step 6:** Identify the standards associated with the text-dependent analysis question

**Excerpt from “Because of Winn-Dixie” by Kate DiCamillo**

I spent a lot of time that summer at the Herman W. Block Memorial Library. The Herman W. Block Memorial Library sounds like it would be a big fancy place, but it’s not. It’s just a little old house full of books, and Miss Franny Block is in charge of them all. She is a very small, very old woman with short gray hair, and she was the first friend I made in Naomi.

It all started with Winn-Dixie not liking it when I went into the library, because he couldn’t go inside, too. But I showed him how he could stand up on his hind legs and look in the window and see me in there, selecting my books; and he was okay, as long as he could see me. But the thing was, the first time Miss Franny Block saw Winn-Dixie standing up on his hind legs like that, looking in the window, she didn’t think he was a dog. She thought he was a bear.

This is what happened: I was picking out my books and kind of humming to myself, and all of a sudden, there was a loud and scary scream. I went running up to the front of the library, and there was Miss Franny Block, sitting on the floor behind her desk.

Miss Franny sat there trembling and shaking.

“Come on,” I said. “Let me help you up. It’s okay.” I stuck out my hand and Miss Franny took hold of it, and I pulled her up off the floor. She didn’t weigh hardly anything at all. Once she was standing on her feet, she started acting all embarrassed, saying how I must think she was a silly old lady, mistaking a dog for a bear, but that she had a bad experience with a bear coming into the Herman W. Block Memorial Library a long time ago, and she never had quite gotten over it.

“When did it happen?” I asked her.

“Well,” said Miss Franny, “it is a very long story.”

“That’s okay,” I told her. “I am like my mama in that I like to be told stories. But before you start telling it, can Winn-Dixie come in and listen, too? He gets lonely without me.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said Miss Franny. “Dogs are not allowed in the Herman W. Block Memorial Library.”

“He’ll be good,” I told her. “He’s a dog who goes to church.” And before she could say yes or no, I went outside and got Winn-Dixie, and he came in and lay down with a “huummmppff” and a sigh, right at Miss Franny’s feet.

She looked down at him and said, “He most certainly is a large dog.”

“Yes ma’am,” I told her. “He has a large heart, too.”

“Well,” Miss Franny said. She bent over and gave Winn-Dixie a pat on the head, and Winn-Dixie wagged his tail back and forth and snuffled his nose on her little old-lady feet. “Let me get a chair and sit down so I can tell this story properly.”

“Back when Florida was wild, when it consisted of nothing but palmetto trees and mosquitoes so big they could fly away with you,” Miss Franny Block started in, “and I was just a little girl no bigger than you, my father, Herman W. Block, told me that I could have anything I wanted for my birthday. Anything at all.”

Miss Franny looked around the library. She leaned in close to me. “I don’t want to appear prideful,” she said, “but my daddy was a very rich man. A very rich man.” She nodded and then leaned back and said, “And I was a little girl who loved to read. So I told him, I said, ‘Daddy, I would most certainly love to have a library for my birthday, a small little library would be wonderful.’”

“You asked for a whole library?”

“A small one,” Miss Franny nodded. “I wanted a little house full of nothing but books and I wanted to share them, too. And I got my wish. My father built me this house, the very one we are sitting in now. And at a very young age, I became a librarian. Yes ma’am.”

“What about the bear?” I said.

“Did I mention that Florida was wild in those days?” Miss Franny Block said.

“Uh-huh, you did.”

“It was wild. There were wild men and wild women and wild animals.”

“Like bears!”

“Yes ma’am. That’s right. Now, I have to tell you. I was a little-miss-know-it-all. I was a miss-smarty-pants with my library full of books. Oh, yes ma’am, I thought I knew the answers to everything. Well, one hot Thursday, I was sitting in my library with all the doors and windows open and my nose stuck in a book, when a shadow crossed the desk. And without looking up, yes ma’am, without even looking up, I said, ‘Is there a book I can help you find?’

“Well, there was no answer. And I thought it might have been a wild man or a wild woman, scared of all these books and afraid to speak up. But then I became aware of a very peculiar smell, a very strong smell. I raised my eyes slowly. And standing right in front of me was a bear. Yes ma’am. A very large bear.”

“How big?” I asked.

“Oh, well,” said Miss Franny, “perhaps three times the size of your dog.”

“Then what happened?” I asked her.

“Well,” said Miss Franny, “I looked at him and he looked at me. He put his big nose up in the air and sniffed and sniffed as if he was trying to decide if a little-miss-know-it-all librarian was what he was in the mood to eat. And I sat there. And then I thought, ‘Well, if this bear intends to eat me, I am not going to let it happen without a fight. No ma’am.’ So very slowly and carefully, I raised up the book I was reading.”

“What book was that?” I asked.

“Why, it was War and Peace, a very large book. I raised it up slowly and then I aimed it carefully and I threw it right at that bear and screamed, ‘Be gone!’ And do you know what?”

No ma’am,” I said.

“He went. But this is what I will never forget. He took the book with him.”

“Nu-uh,” I said.

“Yes ma’am,” said Miss Franny. “He snatched it up and ran.”

“Did he come back?” I asked.

“No, I never saw him again. Well, the men in town used to tease me about it. They used to say, ‘Miss Franny, we saw that bear of yours out in the woods today. He was reading that book and he said it sure was good and would it be all right if he kept it for just another week.’ Yes ma’am. They did tease me about it.” She said. “I imagine I’m the only one left from those days. I imagine I’m the only one that even recalls that bear. All my friends, everyone I knew when I was young, they are all dead and gone.”

She sighed again. She looked sad and old and wrinkled. It was the same way I felt sometimes, being friendless in a new town and not having a mama to comfort me. I sighed, too.

Winn-Dixie raised his head off his paws and looked back and forth between me and Miss Franny. He sat up then and showed Miss Franny his teeth.

“Well now, look at that,” she said. “That dog is smiling at me.”

“It’s a talent of his,” I told her.

“It’s a fine talent,” Miss Franny said. “A very fine talent.” And she smiled back at Winn

“We could be friends,” I said to Miss Franny. “I mean you and me and Winn-Dixie, we could all be friends.”

Miss Franny smiled even bigger. “Why, that would be grand,” she said, “just grand.”

And right at that minute, right when the three of us had decided to be friends, who should come marching into the Herman W. Block Memorial Library but old pinch-faced Amanda Wilkinson. She walked right up to Miss Franny’s desk and said, “I finished Johnny Tremain and I enjoyed it very much. I would like something even more difficult to read now, because I am an advanced reader.”

“Yes dear, I know,” said Miss Franny. She got up out of her chair.

Amanda pretended like I wasn’t there. She stared right past me. “Are dogs allowed in the library?” she asked Miss Franny as they walked away.

“Certain ones,” said Miss Franny, “a select few.” And then she turned around and winked at me. I smiled back. I had just made my first friend in Naomi, and nobody was going to mess that up for me, not even old pinch-faced Amanda Wilkinson.

©Achieve The Core, (2013), <http://www.achievethecore.org/page/19/because-of-winn-dixie-by-kate-dicamillo-with-mini-assessment>, (Published courtesy of Candlewick Press)**Text #1:** **“Life in the Limbs” by Heather Kaufman-Peters**

Imagine stepping out your front door to find yourself 40 feet above the ground overlooking a dense forest and a winding stream. Instead of hopping on your bike, you grab the handles of your very own zipline and fly 1000 yards over a pond, landing safely on the far bank.

Sound crazy? Not to Jonathan Fairoaks, who lives in a four-story tree house that he designed and built! In fact, as a tree house architect, Jonathan has built more than 380 custom tree houses across the United States.

Jonathan's love of tree-house living began when he was a kid. He started climbing trees when he was 10 years old, and he became an arborist (a person who cares for trees) in high school. He built his first tree house and lived in it while he was in college.

"It was delightful—like being on a ship because it moved with the wind," Jonathan says. "It was the most fun I ever had."

Designing unique tree houses may sound tough, but Jonathan says it's no sweat. "I let the trees decide the designs," he says. "Hardwoods such as oak, maple, or hickory make the best trees for houses—but I did once build a wonderful tree house in a crabapple tree.”

"If you want a bigger tree house than the tree can support," he adds, "you can use braces. My tree house is in two trees—an oak and a fir—and has three posts to support the weight."

As a certified arborist, Jonathan tries to never harm the trees.

"I build a tree house so it helps the tree," he says. "The tree's center of gravity is at the top and the ends of its branches, so I build a house down at the center of the tree, which shifts the center of gravity and makes the tree more balanced."

Using a special drill bit, he attaches artificial limbs to the tree to support the tree house.

"The tree grows over the artificial limbs, and they become part of the tree," Jonathan says. "I suspend the house on the artificial limbs so it actually floats."

The tree house is not the only thing suspended in Jonathan's designs. His tree houses always have swings. "Swings are a great way to enjoy the tree," he explains. For live-in tree houses he installs porch swings, and for kids' tree houses he puts up monkey swings (a rope with a round seat).

Jonathan also likes tree houses that overlook streams or rivers and include stained-glass windows to catch the sun's rays. But the most fun tree house designs he ever constructed were inspired by a galaxy far, far away.

"I've done several Ewok Villages," he says, "with ziplines and bridges to other trees and rope swings. Those were fun to build!"

When designing a tree house, the sky's the limit according to Jonathan.

"Let your imagination run wild," he says. "Walk in the woods and learn the different trees. Spend time climbing and learn how to do it safely."

Jonathan also encourages his clients to give their tree houses names. One of his favorite names is "Ups and Downs."

**Text #2:**

**Here’s some more about living in the limbs! Read this interview with tree house expert Pete Nelson.**

**WELCOME TO TREE-HOUSE SCHOOL**

Hey, kids! Jack here. Feeling inspired to design your own tree house? Here's some advice from Pete Nelson, who runs TreeHouse Workshop, a treehouse-building school. He's built tree houses across the United States—and in far-away countries such as Japan and Morocco, too!

*Jack*: What would you include in your dream tree house?

*Pete*: It would have windows everywhere but enough wall space for a favorite painting or two and a shelf for books. It would have a comfortable bed with lots of pillows, a writing desk, and a comfortable reading chair with a good light. Maybe a coffee maker and a tiny sink. And maybe a tiny bathroom, too!

*Jack*: Do books or movies ever give your customers ideas?

*Pete*: We often get asked to recreate the tree house from *The Swiss Family Robinson*.

*Jack*: How do you determine the shape of a tree house?

*Pete*: The trees will **dictate** how a floor plan lays out. Often these are unusual shapes. My tree houses tend to be square because it is less expensive to build square. If someone has all the time in the world to design a tree house, then I would make it wacky and fun!

*Jack*: Any crazy extras to include?

*Pete*: I have added fun stuff like water balloon launchers!

*Jack*: Do you name your tree houses?

*Pete*: We name them all the time: "Babylon," "The Temple of the Blue Moon," "Trillium," "Solace," "Uppermost," and many more.

Now get busy and draw up plans for your own tree house!

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**ELA GRADES 4–8 TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS SCORING GUIDELINES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score Point** | **Description** |
| **4** | * Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) * Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) * Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas * Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas and inferences * Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions * Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose * Skillful use of transitions to link ideas * Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events * Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning |
| **3**  **DRAFT** | * Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) * Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) * Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas * Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences * Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions * Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose * Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas * Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events * Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning |
| **2** | * Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) * Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) * Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas * Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences * Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions * Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose * Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas * Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events * Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning |
| **1** | * Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) * Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion * Minimal evidence of an organizational structure * Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences * Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions * Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) * Few, if any, transitions to link ideas * Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) * Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning |

Pennsylvania Department of EducationFINAL-Fall 2014

**Responding to Text-Dependent Analysis Questions – Modes of Analysis**

1. **Introduction – compelling introduction or “hook” (e.g., quote, action, personal remark, question)**
2. **Development – includes appropriate organization, transitions, language, and conventions**

**What a text says – summary or restatement**

* 1. How would you summarize or write a shortened version of the text containing only the main points?
  2. What is the gist?
  3. What are the ideas in order of importance or presentation?
  4. What ideas might the author be suggesting rather than directly stating? What can you infer from the hints or suggestions?

**What a text does – description: discusses aspects of the presentation of the text (choices of content, author’s perspective, language, and structure)**

* 1. What genre does the selection represent?
  2. How does the piece open – exposition, lead etc.?
  3. Whose voice did the author choose as narrator?
  4. From what point of view was this written?
  5. What are the sources of information and fact? Is there more than one source of information?
  6. What role does dialogue play in the text?
  7. How is the information organized (e.g., time, topic, cause/effect, compare/contrast, persuasion)?
  8. What language is used – dialect, variant spellings, archaic words, etc.?
  9. What are the style, mood, and tone?
  10. What word choice, imagery and figures of speech (e.g., simile, metaphor, alliteration, irony, repetition, personification, etc.) does the author use?
  11. What diction and sentence structure does the author use, and how do the sections of the text relate to each other—from the sentence and paragraph levels to the section and chapter levels?

**What a text means – analysis: interprets the text and asserts a meaning for the text as a whole (putting the message in a larger context and determine theme)**

1. What is the central idea/thesis/theme of the text?
2. How does the author support the central idea, thesis, or theme with ideas and details?
3. What are the purposes, ends, and objectives?
4. What is the author’s stance/perspective towards the topic?
5. How does the author use language: dialect, variant spellings, archaic words, formal or informal words, etc. to shape the tone (the author’s attitude toward the subject) and the meaning of the piece?
6. How does the author use point of view, style, mood, tone, text features, imagery, figures of speech (e.g., simile, metaphor, alliteration, irony, repetition, onomatopoeia, personification, etc.), and the lead, etc. to achieve his/her purpose (author’s intent)?
7. Why does the author choose the method of presentation?
8. What are the concepts that make the reasoning possible, what assumptions underlie the concepts, and what implications follow from the use of the concepts?
9. What does the author want the reader to believe?
10. What is the quality of information collected, and are the sources sufficient, relevant, credible, and current?
11. Who or what is not represented? Why?
12. **Conclusion – relevant statement or section; extends beyond a simple restatement of introduction.**

**Calibration Protocol**

**Purpose:** To calibrate the scoring of student work and to score the instructional implications of the prompt or task, student work, and rubric.

**Planning and Preparation:**

* **Time:** Approximately 60-70 minutes for one set of student work
* **Group size:** 4-8
* **Materials needed for each person:**
  + Prompt or task
  + Task rubric
  + Student work
  + Score sheet
  + Score sheet for recorder
  + **Roles:** Choose a facilitator, timekeeper, and recorder

**Process:**

1. **Examination** (10 minutes): Group members silently examine the text and prompt.
2. **Discuss proficient responses** (10 minutes)**:** The group discusses and comes to consensus on what is expected in a proficient student response.
3. **Read and place in groups** (10 minutes)**:** Using the rubric, group members independently and silently read the student work, ranking them as high, average, or low based on their overall impression.
4. **Score student work** (10 minutes): Student work is then scored and scores are recorded on the score sheet. Scorers should note words and phrases in the rubric’s performance level descriptors that best describe the qualities of the work and make notes to explain and justify their scores. It is important to note that sometimes there won't be work for every score point. Be sure that the scoring rubric and evidence in the student work are the focus rather than trying to find high scores just to have them. Remember, the student work must be worthy of the score assigned.
5. **Score sharing** (2minutes)**:** One at a time, team members share their score for each of the rubric categories – **without explanation** – as the recorder completes the group’s score sheet.
6. **Discussion** (approximately 20 minutes)**:** 
   1. The facilitator invites the group to consider where the differences in the scores occurred and why people scored differently for each rubric area – particularly the highest and lowest scores.
   2. Group members explain and justify scores by pointing to specific language in the rubric and evidence in the student work.
   3. Discuss each piece of student work, resolving issues centered on either the meaning of the rubric or the merit and validity of the evidence in the student work until consensus is reached.
7. **Debrief** (approximately 8 minutes)**:** Discuss the following questions:

* What did we notice about scoring student work and using the rubric?
* What would be the next steps for instructing this student?
* What revisions should be made to the task and instructions?
* What are the implications for our instructional practice?

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**Student Work Analysis – Text-Dependent Analysis Prompts** (page 1)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Task #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Text Under Review (include page #s):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. ***Ensure Understanding about Proficiency***

Read the Text-Dependent Analysis prompt and clarify:

* What are the students expected to do?
* Which standards (CCSS or content standards) or curriculum expectations are being assessed?
* What do you consider to be a proficient response on this prompt? Exactly what do students need to say or write for you to consider their work proficient?
* Did the text-dependent question provide students an appropriate opportunity to demonstrate analysis of the text?

1. ***Diagnosing Student Strengths and Needs***

Sort all students’ work by the general degree of the content expectations met, partially met, not met. You may need a “not sure” pile. After sorting, any papers in the “not sure” pile should be matched with the typical papers in one of the other existing piles. Student names should be recorded in the columns in order to monitor progress over time.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HIGH**  **(Objectives met)** | **EXPECTED**  **(Objectives partially met)** | **LOW**  **(Objectives not met)** |
|  |  |  |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_% OF CLASS | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_% OF CLASS | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_% OF CLASS |

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**Form #3: Student Work Analysis – Text-Dependent Analysis Prompts** (page 2)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Task #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Text Under Review (include page #s):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. For each level (low, expected, high) identify the **strengths or pre-requisite knowledge** that students demonstrated that they knew with regard to R**eading Comprehension (general understanding or gist of the text), Analysis, and Writing** (use the PA Core Standards to guide your thinking).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HIGH**  **(Objectives met)** | **EXPECTED**  **(Objectives partially met)** | **LOW**  **(Objectives not met)** |
|  |  |  |

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**Form #3: Student Work Analysis – Text-Dependent Analysis Prompts** (page 3)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Task #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Text Under Review (include page #s):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Using the reviewed student work from each level, identify the **misconceptions, wrong information, and what students did not demonstrate** that was expected with regard to **Reading Comprehension (general understanding or gist of the text), Text-Dependent Analysis, and Writing**.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HIGH**  **(Objectives met)** | **EXPECTED**  **(Objectives partially met)** | **LOW**  **(Objectives not met)** |
|  |  |  |

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**Form #3: Student Work Analysis – Text-Dependent Analysis Prompts** (page 4)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Task #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Text Under Review (include page #s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. ***Identifying Instructional Next Steps***

After diagnosing what the student knows and still needs to learn, determine the learning needs for the students in each level considering the following questions.

Based on the diagnosis of the students’ performance:

* + What patterns or trends are noted for the whole class?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* + What strategies will be beneficial for the whole class?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* + Based on the diagnosis of students’ responses at the high, expected, and low levels, what will students at each level benefit from?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HIGH**  **(Objectives met)** | **EXPECTED**  **(Objectives partially met)** | **LOW**  **(Objectives not met)** |
|  |  |  |

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**Consider:**

1. What resources and structures are necessary at a classroom/school/district level to support the shift toward evidence-based reading and writing through the use of text-dependent analysis questions?
2. What does a classroom/school/district look like when evidence-based reading and writing is a priority?
3. What are the opportunities and challenges related to the shift toward evidence-based reading and writing?